

New Mainer meeting
Town Chambers
Tues., Sept 3, 5-6:30 pm

In attendance: Melanie S (chair), Dean P, Johanna H, Alex Abbott, Doug R., Tawni W.,
Maura Pillsbury
Notetaker - Liza M

1. Welcome / Introductions / Approved minutes from the last meeting.
2. Needs for New Families - Being publicized very effectively by Freeport Friends (<https://www.freeportfriends.org> and FB group connecting people with needs with support). Freeport Municipal Bulletin also posts volunteer/ donation requests.
 - a) ESL support- to enable learners to practice their English, contact Kelli Parks at RSU5. Babysitting while parents are in class, on location (FCS). (5 volunteers so far for childcare.)
Great language resource for host families -the book: **1st Thousand Words in English** (Doug used French version when traveling with his family).
 - b) Phone cards, minutes for trac phones. (Alex A has available donated iPhone)
 - c) Furniture - have been successful finding queen bed for family moving into an apartment. Melanie has a few good donated mattresses in her barn.
 - d) Legal services - Felix Hagenimana (<https://www.hagenimanalaw.com/about.html>) is immigration lawyer.
3. Fundraising- reviewed Johanna's draft. She will present to Town Council for approval 9/17.
Purpose: Status review, after 6 months (to keep on community radar). Will dissolve fund after __?__ (6 months/ 1 year) of inactivity. Unused funds will be donated to organization assisting asylum seekers.
Eligibility - 3rd bullet point, replace "utilized..." w/ "sought help from..."
Program Guidelines - add "Requests for assistance with expenses for their successful transition into the community." (ie for needs beyond "critical" as referenced in #1)
New Mainer Transition funds will be included in the Town annual appeal letter for other groups (ie library, fuel assistance, fire department).
Want to have Donate button on Town website.
4. Event Planning Updates -
Maura P will coordinate this sub- committee. (To meet after our next meeting, 9/17)
She's been in contact with Grace Valenzuela, director of Multi Cultural / Multi Lingual center (<https://mlc.portlandschools.org/home>) at Portland Public Schools for ideas/ resources for our panel event.
BTW - Oct 18 will be a daylong conference in Portland (https://mlc.portlandschools.org/about/news/beyond_borders_migration_integration)
At our sub committee meeting we will determine target audience for our panel event.

(We have not heard of the need for training for professional staff (ie school staff).)

Goal - to make Freeport a welcoming community. Raise awareness, celebrate.

FCS community hall is available 9/18 and 9/24 but we probably won't be ready until Oct.

5. Action steps - Johanna will update the Fund write up and share; will share info about volunteer opportunities in Municipal Bulletin, with RSU5 (Ginny M) and Library, to be shared with families and community members.

Our Next Meeting - Sept 17, 5- 6.